

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 ACDA-12 L-03

HA-05 /067 W

-----016253 271522Z /50

R 271133Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7131

AMEMBASSY MANILA

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, SOPN, US, RP

SUBJ: PHILIPPINE EMBASSY LETTER TO PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE ON U.S.

BASES

1. WE MADE OFFICIAL INQUIRY OF PHILIPPINE EMBASSY HERE ON DECEMBER 23 CONCERNING LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR (ORIGINAL TEXT BELOW) FROM EMBASSY'S INFORMATION ATTACHE, PRINTED IN DECEMBER 17/18 PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE IN RESPONSE TO THAT PAPER'S REPRINT OF NYT EDITORIAL ENTITLED "PHILIPPINE BASES: WHAT PRICE?"

2. PHILIPPINE CHARGE (RABE) STATED THAT LETTER, ALTHOUGH NOT CLEARED WITH MANILA, WAS THE INITIATIVE OF THE EMBASSY HERE AND THEREFORE, DRCIAL, BUT "MAY NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE PRESENT GOP POSITION." AS THE SOLE PHILIPPINE INFORMATION OFFICER IN ALL OF EUROPE, IT IS NOT UNUSUAL, ACCORDING TO RABE, FOR MS. TIRA, RATHER THAN PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN PARIS, TO REPLY TO SUCH LETTERS. HE CLAIMED THAT HERALD-TRIBUNE EDITORS "TOOK SOME LIBERTIES" WITH MS. TIRA'S LETTER TO MAKE TI APPEAR MORE CONFRONTATIONAL THAN INTENDED.

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3. RABE PROVIDED US COPY OF ORIGINAL TIRA LETTER. PAPER OMITTED FROM LEAD-IN PHRASE "DISTORTS THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THE PHILIPPINES" AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE FINAL PARAGRAPH. ONLY OTHER CHANGES ARE SUBSTITUTION THROUGHOUT OF "U.S." FOR AMERICAN" AND OF "STRAWMAN" FOR "SCARECROW" IN PARA 4. BEGIN TEXT:

2 DECEMBER 1977

EDITORS:

THE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "PHILIPPINE BASES: WHAT PRICE?" OF THE NEW YORK TIMES, IN YOUR ISSUE DATED 26-27 NOVEMBER 1977, DISTORTS THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THE PHILIPPINES APPROACHES THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE AMERICAN MILITARY BASES ON ITS SOIL.

I WISH TO POINT OUT THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) THE AMERICAN MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES ENDANGER RATHER THAN SERVE ITS SECURITY AS A NATION. THEY ARE MAGNETS FOR ATTACK IN THE EVENT OF WAR INVOLVING THE UNITED STATES AND MAKE THE PHILIPPINES A VULNERABLE TARGET FOR THE WEAPONS OF PREDATORY STATES, OF THE WAR BY PROXY.
- 2) IT IS ALSO NO SECRET THAT THE PRESENCE OF MILITARY BASES AND THE EXISTENCE OF BILATERAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, I.E., MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND MUTUAL DEFENSE PACTS, DO NOT MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD AUTOMATICALLY COME TO THE AID OF A COUNTRY IN THE EVENT OF A FOREIGN INVASION. THE DEFEAT OF THE UNITED STATES IN VIETNAM, FOR INSTANCE, ILLUSTRATES CLEARLY THE CHANGEABILITY OF AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO THE DEFENSE OF ITS ALLIES UNDER MUTUAL DEFENSE PACTS. THE U.S. CONGRESS, FOR THAT MATTER, HAS SHOWN ITS RELUCTANCE TO INVOLVE FURTHER AMERICAN ARMED FORCES IN ANY GROUNDWAR IN ASIA.
- 3) IN RETURN FOR ALLOWING AMERICAN BASES ON PHILIPPINE SOIL, THE RP-US MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACT SUFFERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION, EFFECTIVELY DENYING TO THE PHILIPPINES ASSISTANCE COMMITTED AND PLEDGED BY THE UNITED STATES UNDER THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PACT AND AT THE SAME TIME PREVENTED THE PHILIPPINES FROM EXPLOITING OTHER SOURCES FOR ITS NEEDS, BY VIRTUE OF THE SAME PACT'S PROVISIONS.

MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES, WHEN IT CAME, WAS INSUFFICIENT, LIMITED AND UNJUSTLY PROJECTED THE PHILIPPINES AS BEGGING, IF NOT EXTORTING WHAT HAS BEEN COMMITTED UNDER THE AGREEMENT.

- 4) THE EDITORIAL WAVES AGAIN THE "HUMAN-AND-POLITICAL-RIGHTS" ISSUE, A NEWEST SCARECROW OF AMERICAN POLITICS; BUT IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT A PRINCIPAL REASON FOR THE PHILIPPINES' DEMAND FOR JURISDICTION OVER THE AMERICAN BASES IS ITS CONCERN FOR THE TRAMPLING OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE FILIPINOS LIVING WITHIN AND AROUND THESE BASES BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS. AN EXAMPLE IS THE RECENT CASE OF TWO FILIPINO WOMEN UNDRESSED AND SUBJECTED TO ABUSE BY AMERICAN MARINES IN SUBIC BASE. IN THE PAST, MANY OFFENDERS WENT UNPUNISHED BECAUSE OF JURISDICTIONAL TECHNICALITIES.

SUCH "VILLATIONS OF ELEMENTARY STANDARDS" BY AMERICANS ON PHILIPPINE SOIL DO NOT SEEM TO FALL UNDER THE AMERICAN DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN COUNTRIES IT CLAIMS AS ALLIES. THE EDITORIAL SPECULATES, WILDLY ON THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE PHILIPPINES, A CLEAR

INDICATION THAT THE NEW YORK TIMES OPTED TO BASE ITS ACCUSATIONS ON HEARSAY.

IN QUESTIONING THE PAYMENT OF RENT FOR THE BASES, THE EDITORIAL IMPLIES THAT THE PHILIPPINES DESERVES LESS THAN OTHER COUNTRIES IN WHICH AMERICAN BASES ARE SITUATED. AND IN DISCUSSING THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY VALUE OF THE BASES, THE EDITORIAL FAILS TO SAY TWO THINGS MORE SUBSTANTIAL: PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP "GAINED AFTER HALF-CENTURY OF US RULE" IS CHANGING; AND THAT IN INCREASINGLY ANCHORING THIS RELATIONSHIP ON MUTUAL TRUST, RESPECT AND EQUALITY, THE PHILIPPINES SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN HER TRADITION OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES.

VERY TRULY YOURS,
MERCEDES A.B. TIRA, INFORMATION ATTACHE.
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END TEXT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: MARR, SOPN, US, RP
To: STATE MANILA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fa620efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009